

RESEARCH HIGHER DEGREE COURSE RULES POLICY AND PROCEDURE



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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy and procedure provides a consistent set of course rules to govern Research Higher Degrees (RHD) across CQUniversity, ensuring all candidates have a clear and equitable framework, and that RHD courses are consistent with expectations of the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) and requirements relating to Commonwealth-funded research training scheme places.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to the Masters by Research, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Education and Doctor of Professional Studies degrees offered by CQUniversity.
- 2.2 This policy and procedure does not apply to:
- courses involving a substantive and/or formalised period of study outside Australia, such as co-tutelle agreements and fully offshore enrolments. Refer to the [Research Higher Degree \(Offshore\) Course Rules Policy and Procedure](#), or
 - students enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Research. Refer to the [Graduate Certificate in Research Course Rules Policy and Procedure](#).

3 POLICY STATEMENT

Nature of research higher degrees

- 3.1 RHDs offered by CQUniversity shall meet the following definitions, as described in the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#), and [Higher Education Standards \(Threshold Framework\) 2015](#) (CwIth):
- a) Masters Degree by Research requires the planning and execution of a project that includes a substantial piece of research which makes a contribution to knowledge. Candidates in a Masters by Research degree will undertake supervised study and research of which at minimum two-thirds will be devoted to research, research training and independent study.
 - b) Research Doctoral degree (leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy) shall involve a volume and quality of work that makes a significant and original contribution to knowledge. Candidates in a PhD will undertake a program of independent supervised study that produces significant and original research outcomes culminating in a thesis, dissertation, exegesis or equivalent. Research in the program of learning will be for at least two years and typically two-thirds or more of the qualification. The program of learning may also include advanced coursework to enhance the student's capacity to make a significant contribution to knowledge in the discipline (or cross-disciplinary field). The advanced coursework may support but not replace the research outcomes. Research in a PhD may be of pure, exploratory, experimental or creative nature.
 - c) Professional Practice Doctoral degree (leading to the award of Doctor of Education or Doctor of Professional Studies) involves a program of structured learning and independent supervised study that produces significant and original research outcomes culminating in a thesis, dissertation, exegesis or equivalent. Research in the program of learning will be typically for at least two years of the qualification; and must be minimally 50% of the volume of learning in a four year course. The program of structured learning typically will include advanced coursework designed to enhance the student's capacity to make a significant contribution to original knowledge in the discipline (or cross-disciplinary field) and/or research integrated practice developed in collaboration with a relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body. The advanced coursework and research-integrated practice will support the research outcomes. Research in a professional doctorate is focussed on original contribution in the context of professional practice.

4 COURSE RULES AND PROCEDURE

Interpretation

- 4.1 The Research Higher Degrees Committee (RHDC) may delegate routine approval matters to the Chair, RHDC.
- 4.2 The Dean, School of Graduate Research, as Chair, RHDC, is given considerable duties and responsibilities in managing RHDs via the Course Rules. In discharging these duties, the Dean may delegate such responsibility, consult with and/or refer for advice to the Deputy Dean/s (Research), supervisor/s, the candidate and senior research employees as appropriate.
- 4.3 These Course Rules should be read in conjunction with the [Higher Education Qualifications Policy and Procedure](#).

Qualifications for admission as a candidate

- 4.4 The University will consider applications for admission to candidature for RHD courses from individuals who can clearly demonstrate relevant research skills (e.g. research writing, experimental design, data collection and/or analysis) as well as content expertise in their proposed field of study.
- 4.5 An applicant may be considered for admission to candidature for the degree of Masters by Research if the person holds:
- a) an honours degree from CQUniversity or any other approved institution in a relevant discipline
 - b) a three-year undergraduate degree and a graduate diploma at a high level of academic performance in a relevant discipline
 - c) a three-year undergraduate degree at a high level of academic performance in a relevant discipline, plus a minimum of one year's relevant work experience
 - d) a three-year or four-year undergraduate degree with a credit level Grade Point Average (GPA) preferably in a relevant discipline
 - e) completion of the CQUniversity Graduate Certificate in Research with an average of distinction level of achievement, or
 - f) alternative qualification/s and/or experience deemed by RHDC to be of equivalent scope and standard to those listed above.
- 4.6 An applicant may be considered for admission to candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy if the person holds:
- a) a Masters degree either by research or with a substantial element (typically one-third) of research work within it, from a university or any other approved institution
 - b) a Bachelor degree in an appropriate discipline with first class or second class honours conferred by a university or any other approved institution
 - c) a Bachelor degree in an appropriate discipline in addition to completion of the CQUniversity Graduate Certificate in Research with an average of distinction level of achievement, or
 - d) alternative qualification/s and/or experience deemed by RHDC to be of equivalent scope and standard to those listed above.
- 4.7 An applicant may be considered for admission to candidature for the degree of Doctor of Education if the person:
- a) has not less than five years of professional experience in education, and
 - b) holds a Master of Education (Research) or a coursework Masters degree, or
 - c) holds a Bachelor of Education with a minimum of Second Class Division A Honours, or
 - d) holds a Bachelor degree in an education field, in addition to completion of the CQUniversity Graduate Certificate in Research with an average of distinction level of achievement, or
 - e) has alternative qualification/s and/or experience deemed by RHDC to be of equivalent scope and standard to those listed above, and
 - f) has fulfilled such other requirements as RHDC may determine.
- 4.8 An applicant may be considered for admission to candidature for the degree of Doctor of Professional Studies if the person:
- a) has not less than five years of professional experience in roles relevant to the research topic being proposed education, and
 - b) holds a Master degree either by research or with a substantial element of research work (typically one-third) within it, from a University or any other approved higher education institution, or
 - c) holds a Bachelor degree in an appropriate discipline with first class or second class honours conferred by a University or any other approved higher education institution, or

- d) holds a Bachelor degree in a relevant field, in addition to completion of the CQUniversity Graduate Certificate in Research with an average of distinction level of achievement, or
- e) has alternative qualification/s and/or experience deemed by RHDC to be of equivalent scope and standard to those listed above, and
- f) has fulfilled such other requirements as RHDC may determine.

4.9 In considering the above admissions criteria, the University will have regard to:

- the recency of the applicant's formal qualifications and/or professional experience, and
- relevant vocational training qualifications where these are shown to have relevant research or discipline-based content.

The University may also seek additional information from applicants regarding relevant workplace experience, research publications, or other items that can clearly demonstrate research and content-based expertise.

4.10 International applicants are also required to meet the University's English language requirements, as designated by the University, and visa study requirements.

4.11 Where a domestic applicant presents with educational qualifications from an institution that does not instruct in English, the University reserves the right to request evidence of English language proficiency, prior to granting admission.

Application for admission

4.12 An application for admission to RHD candidature can be made at any time of the year.

4.13 In the course of preparing an application for admission, an applicant should consult with the School of Graduate Research to determine eligibility for admission. An applicant and/or the proposed supervision team should also consult with the relevant Deputy Dean (Research) on the proposed research topic, supervision and the availability of adequate resources.

4.14 The application for admission must be submitted on the standard pro forma which includes key information relating to the proposed research project and supervisory panel. This should be accompanied by certified documentary evidence of qualifications and any other information relevant to the admission.

4.15 An application for admission from an international candidate must include certified documentary evidence of English language competency. International applicants will also be required to provide a motivation to study statement and financial declaration to support their application for admission as a Genuine Temporary Entrant.

4.16 For applicants transferring RHD candidature from other institutions, the application for admission must contain an authorised statement of consumed EFTSL from the prior institution. In addition, candidates who are transferring after having already completed the Confirmation of Candidature (or equivalent milestone) are required to supply:

- a) evidence of successful completion of the confirmation and a copy of any approved thesis materials
- b) an itemised research budget
- c) a project timeline indicating key tasks required to reach thesis examination, and
- d) a copy of the candidate's most recent progress report issued by the previous institution.

4.17 The University reserves the right to request additional supporting documentation, such as details of relevant research experience, an extended thesis proposal or professional references of other statements. The University also reserves the right to ask the applicant to attend an admission interview.

Admission to candidature

- 4.18 An applicant may be admitted to a RHD only where the training can be provided in a supervisory and study environment of research activity or other creative endeavour, inquiry and scholarship, and the supervision and resources required for their project are available. Appropriate supervision, as defined in the [Supervision](#) section, must be available from the intended commencement date.
- 4.19 The University may refuse admission to, withdraw an offer to, or cancel an enrolment of an applicant who would otherwise be eligible for admission where it reasonably believes that:
- the applicant or their presence poses a risk to CQUniversity students and/or employees or the wider CQUniversity community
 - the applicant may prejudice the University's reputation, management or good governance
 - the applicant acted in a dishonest and/or deceitful manner when applying for admission to the University or any other tertiary educational institution
 - the applicant would be lawfully prevented from entering University premises for all or part of the course or unit because of a court order or any enactment or decision made under legislation
 - the University would be subject to sanctions under the [Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011](#) (Cwlth), or
 - the applicant would be unable to meet the course or unit requirements, including but not limited to attendance or group participation requirements.
- 4.20 Before deciding to refuse admission, withdraw an offer or cancel an enrolment for a domestic student, the Dean, School of Graduate Research must give the applicant an opportunity to provide written reasons why they should be permitted to attend the University.
- 4.21 Applicants who submit fraudulent information, as part of their admission application, may be permitted to re-apply following a two-year exclusion period for admission. Fees paid may be forfeited.
- 4.22 The Dean, School of Graduate Research may recommend that RHDC recognise prior load consumption, acknowledging work done at another institution at the same level of course, when assessing whether the minimum enrolment period has been met (refer to the [Course of Study](#) section).
- 4.23 A candidate admitting with prior load recognition must enrol with the University and incur applicable tuition liability for a minimum of 28 days candidature.
- 4.24 An offer of admission will be issued from the School of Graduate Research (in the case of domestic applicants), or the International Admissions Office (in the case of international applicants). This will contain a formal Description of Candidature including:
- the date of commencement of candidature
 - the name of the school in which the course will be undertaken
 - the mode of study and campus location (for on-campus candidates)
 - appointment of the supervisors
 - approval of any coursework units which must be satisfactorily completed by the candidate no later than the time of confirmation
 - approval of any period of advanced standing
 - approval the proposed field of research
 - acknowledgment of any applicable prior research candidature and an indication of previous EFTSL consumption (if appropriate), and
 - any special conditions that the candidate may be required to fulfil.
- 4.25 Candidature will be deemed to have commenced as at the date indicated on the Description of Candidature and as confirmed by the candidate when accepting the offer of admission.

Enrolment

- 4.26 Candidature may commence at any time of year, but offers of admission will be made subject to resource availability and administrative processes, and having regard to the implications of term and Census dates and any applicable tuition liability.
- 4.27 The standard course length for research training courses at the University is:
- two EFTSL for Masters by Research candidates
 - four EFTSL for Doctoral candidates (Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Education and Doctor of Professional Studies).
- 4.28 These standard periods will be calculated from date of commencement to date of conferral of the award, and are:
- inclusive of pre-confirmation, confirmation, thesis preparation and submission, plus any revisions as required by the Chair of Examiners
 - exclusive of any leave of absence periods, and the time during which the thesis is under examination.
- 4.29 A candidate who has consumed more than the standard EFTSL will be considered an over-time candidate.
- 4.30 A candidate will continue to be re-enrolled under the same conditions as per the previous term, unless the School of Graduate Research is formally advised in writing. An over-time candidate must formally advise the School of Graduate Research if they do not wish to continue with their research course.
- 4.31 A request for a change to the term of enrolment that is received after the applicable Census date will not be honoured unless in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.32 A candidate who is required to undertake major revisions following thesis examination shall be required to re-enrol for a prescribed period of not less than one Census period, irrespective of enrolment mode. Such enrolments will be automatically completed by the School of Graduate Research and a confirmation of enrolment forwarded to the candidate. This will occur unless a candidate has formally advised that they do not intend to perform the thesis revisions within 28 days of receipt of the examination advice.
- 4.33 Domestic candidates on a Commonwealth funded place and who have consumed all of their funded place will be required to pay full fees should they choose to remain in the course, unless advised in writing by the Dean, School of Graduate Research.
- 4.34 International candidates are required to fully fund their enrolment in the RHD course, unless otherwise advised in writing by the University.
- 4.35 A candidate wishing to transfer between offshore and onshore enrolment types may only do so by application to the Dean, School of Graduate Research.

Study load

- 4.36 Applicants to RHD courses may be accepted as either full-time or part-time candidates. International candidates should be mindful of visa requirements that may dictate the need to study full-time.
- 4.37 RHD studies may be undertaken in either on-campus or online mode. Permission to enrol as an online candidate shall only be granted where:
- a) appropriate supervision arrangements are available
 - b) access can be guaranteed to laboratories, equipment, research literature and resource materials as necessary for the successful completion of the research, and
 - c) the candidate agrees to attend the University for such periods and purposes as specified in the [Professional Practice Doctorates section](#).
- 4.38 A candidate may transfer from one mode to another on such terms as approved by the University.

- 4.39 Full-time candidates will be expected to contribute between 35 to 40 hours per week to their research and thesis. Part-time candidates will be expected to contribute between 17.5 to 20 hours per week to their research and thesis.
- 4.40 Candidates may participate in forms of paid or unpaid employment, voluntary positions and other duties, provided that this does not impede satisfactory academic progress.

Status of candidature

- 4.41 Admission to RHD courses shall initially be offered as provisional candidature. For applicants transferring from other institutions where the confirmation (or equivalent milestone) has already been completed, the Dean, School of Graduate Research may waive the provisional candidature and approve an offer of full (confirmed) candidature.
- 4.42 During the period of provisional candidature, the candidate will develop, in consultation with the supervisors, a detailed thesis proposal in accordance with the [Confirmation of Candidature Procedure](#).
- 4.43 Provisional candidates are required to undertake the Confirmation of Candidature (CoC) milestone within a set period from the calendar date of commencement. These relevant periods are:
- a) for Masters by Research candidates, full approval before 0.75 EFTSL, with the CoC portfolio submitted by the candidate at or before 0.50 EFTSL
 - b) for Doctor of Philosophy candidates, full approval before 1.00 EFTSL, with the CoC portfolio submitted by the candidate at or before 0.75 EFTSL
 - c) For Doctor of Education candidates, full approval before 1.50 EFTSL, with the CoC portfolio submitted by the candidate at or before 1.25 EFTSL, and
 - d) for Doctor of Professional Studies candidates, full approval before 1.50 EFTSL, with the CoC portfolio submitted by the candidate at or before 1.25 EFTSL.
- 4.44 The University reserves the right to terminate candidature if the candidate does not demonstrate satisfactory completion of all prescribed conditions as well as successful completion of the Confirmation milestone, by the required date. Where it is determined that a provisional candidature shall be terminated, the candidate shall be given the opportunity to show cause why such action should not be taken.
- 4.45 All conditions imposed on candidature as outlined within the attachment to Offer of Admission should be fulfilled by the candidate at the time of confirmation of candidature. Full candidature will not proceed until all requirements are met.
- 4.46 Approval of a candidate's transition to full candidature is a decision made by the Dean, School of Graduate Research, who may require changes to the course of research and study, confirm the candidature or take such other action as is deemed appropriate.

Course of study

- 4.47 All research, thesis preparation and administrative tasks undertaken within these Course Rules must be conducted in English.
- 4.48 All research, thesis preparation and administrative tasks undertaken within these Course Rules must be conducted in accordance with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).
- 4.49 On admission to candidature, a candidate is required to pursue a supervised and approved course of research and study leading to the submission of a thesis in:
- a) not less than one EFTSL or more than four EFTSL for a candidate in Masters by Research
 - b) not less than two EFTSL or more than eight EFTSL for a candidate in the Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Education or Doctor of Professional Studies.

The above EFTSL reflects total consumption, inclusive of any prior load at a previous institution, but exclusive of any periods of approved leave.

- 4.50 All candidates are required to achieve at least a pass grade in the prescribed coursework unit RSCH20001 Prepare for Confirmation, before the Confirmation of Candidature milestone will be approved. Exemptions from this unit and/or substitution with alternate coursework research units, may be sought during the admissions process, at the discretion of the Dean, School of Graduate Research. Exemptions and/or substitutions must be endorsed by the principal supervisor.
- 4.51 Additional coursework units may also be listed on the offer of admission.
- Where these unit/s are prescribed, it is a requirement that the candidate complete these as a component of the program of study
 - Where these unit/s are strongly recommended, the candidate may elect whether to enrol in the unit, in consultation with their supervisor.
- 4.52 In the course of the approved course of research and study, a candidate may be required to:
- attend the University for consultation and other purposes as deemed necessary
 - participate in lectures and seminars and perform such practical work as prescribed by RHDC, and/or
 - present their research at an appropriate scholarly or professional venue as an unassessed component of the candidature.
- 4.53 A candidate who wishes to change their study location from that which was approved at time of admission must apply in writing to the Dean, School of Graduate Research. Approval will be granted only in circumstances whereby continued supervisory and an appropriate study environment can be maintained, as per sections 4.18 and 4.85-89.
- 4.54 Candidates who are living with a diagnosed disability, medical or mental health condition are encouraged to register with the University's [Inclusion and Accessibility Service](#). Through this service, candidates may be able to access flexible arrangements for assessment items and other support measures, through the development and implementation of a tailored Accessibility Plan.
- 4.55 Candidates are not permitted to hold enrolment in any other RHD courses at either Australian or international institutions, during their period of candidature. (Note: candidates enrolled in dual-award courses are accommodated separately under this policy and procedure for their enrolment.)
- 4.56 A candidate may not engage in any other academic course of study leading to a higher education or vocational qualification without the approval of the Dean, School of Graduate Research. Approval:
- will not be provided unless the candidate has demonstrated strong progress in their RHD
 - will be granted to full-time candidates only in exceptional circumstances, or where this is a requirement of the Description of Candidature, and
 - may be granted to part-time candidates where it can be clearly demonstrated that the external studies will not impact on timely progress in the RHD course.
- 4.57 Candidates are encouraged to participate in research training offered by the School of Graduate Research and other academic Schools within the University, in order to enhance research skills and graduate attributes. Some elements of this training may be deemed as mandatory, and candidates will be advised of these requirements at time of admission and/or periodically during candidature.
- 4.58 Candidates who seek to change the focus of the research such that it represents a significant departure from the approved course of research and study, or who seek to transfer candidature to an alternative RHD course, should consult the [Research Higher Degree Change of Topic and/or Course Policy and Procedure](#).

Exit award

- 4.59 A RHD candidate may request consideration for conferral of the Graduate Certificate in Research (CGR) in recognition of work undertaken during candidature if the candidate has either:
- already been approved for full candidature status, or
 - not yet been confirmed, but can demonstrate learning outcomes equivalent to the Confirmation of Candidature milestone during an agreed timeframe.

- 4.60 The candidate will only be considered for the exit award of the GCR where they are withdrawing from the RHD enrolment. The exit award is not available to continuing candidates.
- 4.61 Where the candidate has already achieved a fully approved Confirmation of Candidature, exit with the GCR will be available on request, with no requirement to undertake further preparation of work or undergo a separate assessment.
- 4.62 Where the candidate seeks to exit with the GCR but has not yet achieved a fully approved Confirmation of Candidature, they will be referred for enrolment into the GCR and/or provided with information about the extra tasks that must be completed, and the timeframe for doing to, in order to be awarded the GCR.
- 4.63 For further information regarding the learning outcomes in the GCR, please refer to the [Graduate Certificate in Research Course Rules](#).
- 4.64 Candidates receiving the Graduate Certificate in Research as an Exit Award will be allocated the academic outcome of 'Satisfactory' only. A graded assessment outcome will not be provided on the academic transcript for an Exit Award.

Approved industry placements

- 4.65 RHD candidates may be approved to undertake an agreed paid or unpaid industry placement, for periods of 30 days up to six months. Approval must be sought from the Dean, School of Graduate Research prior to commencing an industry placement.
- 4.66 An industry placement involves a period of research, which may or may not be directly linked with a candidate's thesis topic, undertaken in an industry setting. Industries may include businesses, governments, government business enterprises, non-government organisations, not-for-profit organisations and community organisations
- 4.67 Approval to undertake an industry placement will only be granted where the candidate can demonstrate satisfactory progress, and where undertaking the placement will not affect timely completion of the program of research and study.
- 4.68 During an industry placement, a candidate will remain an enrolled student of the University.
- 4.69 Candidates in receipt of a scholarship stipend should refer to the [Research Training Program and Research Higher Degree Scholarships Policy and Procedure](#), for information relating to continuation of stipend payments during an industry placement.

Professional practice doctorates

This section applies to candidates enrolled in the Doctor of Education or Doctor of Professional Studies degrees. These course rules should be read in conjunction with the [Research Tasks in Professional Practice Doctoral Degrees Procedure](#), particularly with respect to requests for advanced standing credit.

- 4.70 On admission to candidature, the candidate shall pursue a supervised course of study and research, as approved by RHDC, leading to the submission of a portfolio of written work which shall include a thesis. For the professional practice doctorates, the course of study shall consist of:
- four Research Tasks prescribed by the School, and as approved by RHDC
 - confirmation of candidature, encompassing a written research proposal or a proposal, deemed equivalent by RHDC, and
 - a thesis component, approved by RHDC.

Research tasks

- 4.71 A candidate shall, unless otherwise exempted by RHDC, complete a prescribed course in research and research methodology, and such other courses, as prescribed by RHDC.

- 4.72 Assessment of each Research Task shall comprise such combination of work, assignments, tests and formal examinations as determined by the Deputy Dean (Research), on behalf of the Dean, School of Graduate Research, in consultation with the supervisors.
- 4.73 All prescribed Research Tasks must be successfully completed, and a satisfactory level of achievement must be maintained by the candidate during the completion of the tasks.
- 4.74 Satisfactory progression through the Research Tasks shall culminate in a portfolio of written work approximately 30,000 words in length.

Research proposals

- 4.75 A candidate shall develop, in consultation with the supervisors, a detailed course of research and study, in accordance with the [Confirmation of Candidature Procedure](#). The proposal should be no more than 10,000 words, or a proposal deemed equivalent by RHDC. The proposal may contain elements that are revised and edited products of work undertaken in the structured Research Tasks.

Thesis component

- 4.76 A candidate shall not commence the thesis component until RHDC is satisfied that the course of Research Tasks has been completed successfully, and that the research proposal has been defended satisfactorily during the Confirmation of Candidature process.
- 4.77 A candidate shall prepare, under supervision, a thesis based on the research proposal. The thesis shall constitute a substantial investigation into a selected aspect of professional practice and be approximately 60,000 words in length, or a thesis deemed equivalent by RHDC.

Attendance at the University

- 4.78 The University encourages candidates to attend its campuses (including regional and metropolitan campus locations, study hubs, and virtual spaces as appropriate) and to be part of the University community.
- 4.79 The University reserves the right to vary the agreed arrangements to require the candidate to attend on-campus for certain periods, if such attendance is felt to be necessary for the successful pursuit of the study course. Such variations will be discussed initially with the candidate's supervisory panel and the relevant Deputy Dean (Research).

Leave of absence

- 4.80 On application by the candidate, the Dean, School of Graduate Research may grant leave of absence from the course of research and study for a period of not less than three days and not exceeding 365 days. Periods in excess of 365 days will be considered only in exceptional circumstances and will require supporting documentation.
- 4.81 For international candidates, periods of extended leave of absence (exceeding 30 days) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. An international candidate must supply detailed information to demonstrate that the leave of absence, if granted, will comply with obligations required by the Australian Government under the relevant visa class.
- 4.82 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent candidates may access additional leave of absence for Indigenous Cultural and/or Ceremonial leave purposes. Such leave will be granted at the discretion of the Dean, School of Graduate Research and shall not reasonably be refused. Refer to the [Definitions](#) section for what may be deemed an appropriate basis for cultural and/or ceremonial leave.
- 4.83 The period of leave of absence will not be counted as part of a candidate's EFTSL consumption.
- 4.84 Candidates should note that liability for tuition fees may still apply, where the period of leave is less than one Census period in duration. Candidates should seek advice from the School of Graduate Research regarding tuition liability, prior to applying for a leave of absence.

- 4.85 During a leave of absence, the candidate will not be afforded access to University facilities and resources including office and laboratory space, supervision, training opportunities and any applicable candidate funding allocations. A candidate will, however, be able to maintain access to CQUniversity email and associated information technology systems, including standard library services.
- 4.86 Scholarship holders should consult with the School of Graduate Research any implications a leave of absence may have with regard to stipend payments and any applicable leave balances, before lodging a request for leave.
- 4.87 Candidates resuming from a leave of absence must formally notify the School of Graduate Research, in writing, of their return to study date. Candidates resuming from an extended leave of absence (30 days or more) may also be required to supply a revised project timeline, thesis plan and/or candidate-supervisor memorandum of understanding, upon returning to study.
- 4.88 The University reserves the right to refuse re-enrolment to a candidate returning from an extended leave of absence (30 days or more) in the event that the University is unable to provide adequate resources, facilities or supervision for the approved project, at the proposed time of resumption.
- 4.89 A candidate who is recommencing study after a period of leave, or withdrawal from study, will be required to enrol for a minimum period of four weeks, prior to submitting a thesis for examination. This will allow sufficient time for lodgement of the Intention to Submit, as well as perusal of the final thesis draft by the supervisory panel and/or professional editor, as appropriate.

Supervision

- 4.90 A candidate will be deemed to have appropriate, continuing supervisory arrangements only when:
- there is a principal supervisor who holds a doctoral degree, or has equivalent research experience, and who is active in research and publishing in, or otherwise making original contributions to, a relevant field or discipline
 - there is at least one associate supervisor with relevant research expertise, and
 - the principal supervisor is an employee of CQUniversity, or has a relevant adjunct appointment, or is otherwise formally contracted and accountable to the provider for supervisory duties.
- 4.91 The supervisory panel (principal plus one or more associate supervisors) will be appointed by the Dean, School of Graduate Research in consultation with the Deputy Dean/s (Research) and relevant line managers, in accordance with the [Research Higher Degree Supervision Policy and Procedure](#).
- 4.92 Where a candidate's supervision arrangements have been dissolved due to resignation or departure of the principal supervisor, the candidate shall be placed on interim leave until such time that an appropriate principal supervisor has been appointed.
- 4.93 A candidate shall consult the supervisory panel regularly during the course of developing and undertaking the prescribed course of research and during preparation of the thesis, and must, as the supervisors may require, submit drafts of the thesis for advice and comment prior to its submission for examination.

Progress reporting

- 4.94 On receipt of a documented request from RHDC, the candidate will submit, half-yearly progress reports no later than 30 April and 30 September each year. On consideration of the progress report, the University may request the candidate to provide a further response.
- 4.95 Where the Dean, School of Graduate Research, determines that the candidate has failed to make satisfactory academic progress in the work, or meet the conditions of candidature imposed by RHDC, the candidature may be terminated. However, as a matter of normal practice, candidature shall not be terminated on the basis of unsatisfactory progress unless RHDC is satisfied that a reasonable attempt has been made to ensure that the candidate has been:
- clearly warned of shortcomings in research performance

- advised of means of overcoming these shortcomings and of obtaining a satisfactory standard of performance in the research, and
- provided the opportunity to take action as directed.

Submission and examination of the thesis

- 4.96 Thesis examination will be conducted in accordance with the [Research Higher Degrees Examination Policy and Procedure](#).
- 4.97 The candidate shall give notice, through the principal supervisor, of the intention to submit a thesis no less than four weeks prior to the proposed date of submission.
- 4.98 Where, following consultation with the other supervisors, the principal supervisor has any doubt as to whether the thesis is in a suitable format and/or of examinable quality, the supervisor is not required to endorse the notice. The principal supervisor is required, however, to advise the candidate and RHDC of the reasons why support has not been forthcoming.
- 4.99 Where the principal supervisor refuses to endorse the notice for reasons other than failure to complete prescribed studies, the candidate may request consideration to the Dean, School of Graduate Research, to submit the thesis for examination.
- 4.100 The candidate shall ensure that the requirements of the [Research Higher Degree Theses Policy and Procedure](#) have been met.
- 4.101 A candidate who has revised a thesis in accordance with the [Research Higher Degree Examination Policy and Procedure](#) and who fails a re-examination shall not be eligible for any further examination.
- 4.102 In the event that an examined thesis receives an outcome of major revisions, the candidate shall be required to re-enrol for a prescribed period of not less than six months and no longer than 12 months. These are set time periods and are irrespective of enrolment mode.

Intellectual property

- 4.103 Where research projects are conducted in cooperation with, or under the sponsorship of industry, or where the intellectual property may have commercial significance, the University requires that negotiations with respect to the ownership of any intellectual property arising from or associated with the research project, be formalised prior to the confirmation of candidature.
- 4.104 In the event that details of any intellectual property or process improvement are contained within a thesis, and where the candidate does not seek to restrict public access to that thesis, the principal supervisor may seek to protect the interests of the University and/or sponsor and apply through RHDC for such restriction to be approved.
- 4.105 Consistent with the [Intellectual Property and Moral Rights Policy](#) (especially relating to patents, royalties and proprietary information which are still being formulated), the candidate shall hold copyright in any thesis associated with or arising from their research candidature. Ownership of intellectual property may be negotiated between the candidate, University and any funding partners.

Conferral of award

- 4.106 The Chair of Examiners will determine whether the candidate has satisfied the requirements for the degree.
- 4.107 Where the candidate has met the requirements for the degree, the Chair of Examiners will recommend to the Dean, School of Graduate Research (or Vice-President (Research) where the Dean, School of Graduate Research is unavailable or has a conflict of interest) for conferral of the award.
- 4.108 Where this is contention as to whether the candidate has satisfied the requirements for the degree, the Dean, School of Graduate Research may consult with the Vice-President (Research) or undertake other internal or external consultation prior to making a determination.

Responsibilities of the candidate

- 4.109 It is the candidate's responsibility to regularly monitor official University correspondence, communication channels and their enrolment dashboard to keep abreast of information and requirements relating to their candidature, particularly with regard to student accounts.
- 4.110 At any point during their candidature, the University reserves the right to require the candidate to make contact with the School of Graduate Research. Failure to make contact within the prescribed period will result in the candidate being asked to show cause as to why their candidature should not be terminated.
- 4.111 Candidates have responsibility to inform the School of Graduate Research of matters relating to their enrolment, attendance at the University and academic progress. Candidates also have responsibility to address requests for information or actioning from their supervisors, Deputy Dean (Research) and/or the School of Graduate Research.
- 4.112 Show cause notices and/or funding restrictions may be placed on any candidate who has:
- failed to supply a progress report in a timely manner
 - failed to respond to conditions arising from the progress report in a timely manner, or
 - failed to respond to any other formal administrative request or academic expectation of the University in a timely manner.
- 4.113 These Course Rules do not cover issues of visa arrangements, deferments, confirmation of enrolment or insurance. It is the responsibility of an international candidate to notify and seek appropriate advice from the International and Services Division, and other appropriate authorities external to the University, regarding matters of on-campus attendance.

Appeals

- 4.114 A candidate, supervisor or examiner who has reasonable grounds for dissatisfaction with any formal decision made under this policy or procedure may lodge an appeal by written request to the Dean, Graduate Studies, within 28 days of date of issue of the decision. If the candidate or supervisor can demonstrate that the process was not followed or that new evidence is available, they may lodge a further internal appeal with the Vice-President (Research).
- 4.115 With regard to matters relating to academic assessment, a candidate who has reasonable grounds for dissatisfaction with any formal decision may appeal, in writing, to the Academic Appeals Committee. An appeal shall be received by that Committee within 28 days of formal notification of the decision.
- 4.116 The University recognises the importance of providing prompt and fair complaint resolution procedures for candidates, without victimisation for initiating or participating in the settlement. The candidate's enrolment will be maintained (without additional tuition liability) while the complaint and appeals process is ongoing. For further information, please refer to the [Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).
- 4.117 Any candidate not satisfied with the outcome of their internal appeal may appeal the decision by referring the matter to the [Queensland State Ombudsman](#) or to a court or tribunal with an appropriate jurisdiction. The University Student Ombudsman is also available to any candidate wishing to seek advice in regards to an appeal.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.1 The Dean, School of Graduate Research is responsible for monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this policy and procedure.

Reporting

- 5.2 Regular reporting on admissions, progress reports and successful completions of RHD candidates will be presented to RHDC as per the reporting schedule and via the Chair's Report.

Records management

- 5.3 Employees must manage records in accordance with the [Records Management Policy and Procedure](#). This includes retaining these records in a recognised University recordkeeping information system.
- 5.4 University records must be retained for the minimum periods specified in the University Sector Retention and Disposal Schedule on the [Queensland State Archives website](#). Before disposing of any records, approval must be sought through the Records Management Office (email records@cqu.edu.au).

6 DEFINITIONS

- 6.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University's [glossary](#).

Terms and definitions

Ceremonial obligations: may be “traditional” or “urban” in nature and may include initiation, birthing and naming, funerals, smoking or cleansing and sacred site or land ceremonies.

EFTSL: Equivalent full-time student load, one EFTSL is equivalent to one year of full-time study.

Indigenous Cultural or Ceremonial Leave: applies to candidates who identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. Leave will not be unreasonably refused to fulfil ceremonial obligations.

Over-time candidate: a candidate who has exhausted the standard EFSTL in their course; such candidates will be liable for additional tuition liability.

7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#)

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

[Australian Qualifications Framework](#)

[Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011](#) (Cwth)

[Confirmation of Candidature Procedure](#)

[Graduate Certificate in Research Course Rules](#)

[Higher Education Qualifications Policy and Procedure](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015](#) (Cwth)

[Research Higher Degree Change of Topic and/or Course Policy and Procedure](#)

[Research Higher Degree Examination Policy and Procedure](#)

[Research Higher Degree Supervision Policy and Procedure](#)

[Research Higher Degree Theses Policy and Procedure](#)

[Research Training Program and Research Higher Degree Scholarships Policy and Procedure](#)

[Student Ombudsman Procedure](#)

8 FEEDBACK

Feedback about this document can be emailed to policy@cqu.edu.au.

9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Research Higher Degrees Committee
Advisory Committee	N/A
Administrator	Dean, School of Graduate Research
Next Review Date	02/07/2023

Approval and Amendment History	Details
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Notes	This document consolidates the Program Rules for Degree of Doctor of Business Research, Program Rules for Degree of Doctor of Education, Program Rules for Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Program Rules for Degree of Doctor of Professional Studies Policy and Procedure and Program Rules for Masters Degree by Research.